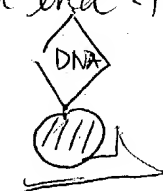


Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Probe = a rod movable in vertical bore +  
provided w/ a magnet at the lower end thereof.



1. (Currently Amended) A ~~process~~ <sup>analyte not the probe</sup> method for the purification of a substance, wherein a material containing the substance, and magnetic particles coated or treated with a reagent which binds the particles to the substance, are dispensed in a first medium, a binding reaction is let to take place, in which reaction the substance is bound to the particles, a magnetic probe is pushed into the medium, whereby particles adhere to the probe, the probe together with the particles and the substance bound to them is transferred to a second medium, and wherein a surface tension releasing agent is dispensed in at least one of the mediums.
2. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the surface tension releasing agent is selected from a group consisting of tenside, alcohol, protein, salt and carbohydrate.
3. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2, wherein the surface tension releasing agent is a tenside in the form of a detergent.
4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 3, wherein the concentration of the tenside is 0.001 to 0.5% (w/v).
5. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2, wherein the surface tension releasing agent is a protein.
6. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 5, wherein the concentration of the protein is 0.1 to 10% (w/v).
7. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2, wherein the surface tension releasing agent is a salt.

8. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 7, wherein the concentration of the salt is 0.1 to 10 M.

9. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 for the purification of a material selected from a group consisting of cells, viruses, subcellular organelles, proteins, and nucleic acid materials.

10. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9 for the purification of nucleic acid materials.

11. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the size of the magnetic particles is less than 50  $\mu\text{m}$ .

12. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the concentration of the magnetic particles is 0.01 to 5 mg/ml.

13. (Previously Presented) A method for separating magnetic particles by a magnetic probe from a medium, said method comprising the step of dispensing a surface tension releasing agent into the medium before the particles are separated from the medium.

14. (Previously Presented) A method for improving the adherence of magnetic particles from a liquid medium to a magnetic probe to be pushed into the medium, said method comprising the step of dispensing a surface tension releasing agent into the medium before the particles are adhered to the probe.

15. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the probe together with the particles and the substance bound to them is separated from the second medium and transferred to a third medium.

16. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, where a surface tension releasing agent is dispensed in at least the first medium before the probe and the particles are transferred from it.

17. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein a surface tension releasing agent is dispensed in all mediums before the probe and the particles are transferred therefrom.

18. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 4, wherein the concentration of the tenside is 0.005 to 0.1% (w/v).

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18, wherein the concentration of the tenside is 0.01 to 0.05% (w/v).

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 6, wherein the concentration of the protein is 0.25 to 5% (w/v).

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 20, wherein the concentration of the protein is 0.5 to 2% (w/v).

22. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 8, wherein the concentration of the salt is 0.1 to 7 M.

23. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 11, wherein the size of the magnetic particles is 0.1 to 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .

24. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 23, wherein the size of the magnetic particles is 1 to 5  $\mu\text{m}$ .

25. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 12, wherein the concentration of the magnetic particles is 0.5 to 3 mg/ml.

26. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 25, wherein the concentration of the magnetic particles 0.2 to 2 mg/ml.